



City of Mesa Youth Sports SOCCER RULEBOOK Fall 2016

Due to the goal of our league and nature of kids still trying to understand the concepts of the game, it is unrealistic for our referees to call absolutely every violation. We ask everyone to please be patient with our referees. They truly want to help the kids so will be both guiding and officiating them. The first game will be officiated with a little more leniency so the kids can get acclimated to the league and game. Games will be officiated as fairly as possible while still allowing a flow and continuity to the game without constant stoppage. This is to help ensure the kids enjoy the playing experience as much as possible.

(US Youth Soccer Rules (small sided games) will be followed and enforced unless otherwise noted below.)

Section 1: League Divisions

- Co-Ed Kindergarten
- Co-Ed 1st-2nd Grade
- Co-Ed 3rd-4th Grade
- Co-Ed 5th-6th Grade

Section 2: Team Composition and Playing Time

- Teams will have the following number of players:
 - Co-Ed Kindergarten will have up to 8 players approximately.
 - Co-Ed 1st-2nd Grade will have up to 10 players approximately.
 - Co-Ed 3rd-4th Grade will have up to 12 players approximately.
 - Co-Ed 5th-6th Grade will have up to 12 players approximately.
- A team shall consist of the following number of players to start a game:
 - Co-Ed Kindergarten plays 4 vs 4. (No goalie. Can play defense in goal area, but no hands may be used. Can play with as few as 3.)
 - Co-Ed 1st-2nd Grade plays 5 vs 5. (No goalie. Can play defense in goal area, but no hands may be used. Can play with as few as 4.)
 - Co-Ed 3rd-4th Grade plays 6 vs 6 including the goalie (Can play with as few as 5.)
 - Co-Ed 5th-6th Grade plays 8 vs 8 including the goalie (Can play with as few as 7.)
- This league is an equal play league. This means equal opportunity to participate in both playing time and positions. No participant may play 3 quarters until everyone has played 2 quarters. No participant may play 4 quarters until everyone has played 3 quarters. Only exception to this is if players have repeated absences from practices and games.

Section 3: Equipment, Field and Goal Dimensions

- Teams play on small sided fields. All measurements are approximations. Fields may be adjusted to meet the needs of the league and facility space.
- Co-Ed Kindergarten
 - size 3 ball
 - 90' x 60' field

- 4' pop up goal
- Co-Ed 1st-2nd Grade
 - size 3 ball
 - 120' x 75' field
 - 4' x 8' goal
- Co-Ed 3rd-4th Grade
 - size 4 ball
 - 180' x 135' field
 - 6' x 12' goal
- Co-Ed 5th-6th Grade
 - size 5 ball
 - 210' x 165' field
 - 6.5' x 18.5' goal

Section 4: Uniform

- Athletic shoes or plastic cleats are required during all practices and games for safety reasons.
- Shin guards are required during all practices and games for safety reasons.
- Referees will check for shin guards and proper shoes before each game.
- Participants will receive a team shirt with a number on the back at their first game. This shirt must be worn to each game. If shirt is lost or forgotten, player/coach must notify referee prior to the start of the game.
- Uniform shirt must be worn on the outside layer of all clothing.
- No jewelry except medical alert items.

Section 5: Regular Season Games

- Each team will play seven regular season games. They will play one game per week on Tuesdays (Kindergarten/3rd-4th) and Thursdays (1st-2nd/5th-6th).
- Games will start on time as scheduled and are unable to be delayed to wait for coaches, players or teams. Players and coaches are expected to arrive early in order to prepare and be ready to play on time.
- Postponed games may or may not be rescheduled depending on availability in the season and is at the discretion of the league director.
- Forfeited games will not be rescheduled. If both teams fail to show up to their scheduled game, then both teams will be given a forfeit.
- Home team will be listed first on the schedule. Home team shall supply a person to work the visual scoreboard. Minimum age of 18 years. This is not needed in the kindergarten and 1st-2nd grade divisions.
- Home team receives the ball for starting the game and away team picks which goal they want to defend.

Section 6: Single Elimination Tournament

- Each team will play in a single elimination tournament within their division on the last week of the season. (No tournament for kindergarten. Will play just one regular game instead.)

- Medals will be given for 1st and 2nd place tournament winners in each division. Participation ribbons are given to all other teams.
- Tournament seeding will be determined randomly.
- The tournament games will follow the same rules and guidelines as regular season except that 1st-2nd grade divisions will keep score during the tournament.
- Due to ongoing sportsmanship issues during the tournament, there is a zero tolerance policy. A court monitor will be supervising each game to ensure proper conduct is displayed by everyone.

Section 7: Volunteer Coaches

- Abide by the Coaches' Code of Ethics, Coach Handbook and League Rulebook
- At least one approved coach must attend all practices and games. If unable to attend a practice or game, they must contact the league director in advance to make other arrangements.
- Only the approved coaches who have been cleared by the league director and completed the requirements may coach a team during games and practices as well as be on the team bench and team sidelines. This is for safety reasons.
- Volunteer coaches will be given a team shirt at their first game. This shirt must be worn to each game.
- Volunteer coaches must wear their volunteer badge at all practices and games.
- Only two coaches per team may coach a team during a game.

Section 8: Sidelines, Coach Placement, Team Bench, and Safety Line

- The designated team benches shall be on the same side of field with one team per half. The designated team sidelines are for staff, cleared and approved volunteer coaches, and registered players only. Team bench selection is first come, first serve.
- Teams in the kindergarten grade division may have two coaches stand on the sideline during play to instruct players OR may have one coach on the sideline and one coach on the field. Coaches may not stand in front of the opposing team's bench or in the middle of players on the field. All efforts should be made to stay off to the side in order to not interfere with players or the game. Players must remain in their designated team bench area when not playing.
- Coaches and players in the 1st-2nd, 3rd-4th, and 5th-6th grade divisions must remain in their designated team bench and sideline. Coaches may not stand on the field, in front of the opposing team's bench/sideline or at the goals.
- A coach may stand during play to instruct players in a non-disruptive manner and may stand and move about their designated bench to speak to players. Acts deemed disruptive by the referee shall be sanctioned. Examples of disruptive/unsportsmanlike act shall include, but are not limited to: loud or abusive language, comments to official(s), comments to opposing teams, throwing of objects, displaying disgust in an overt manner or, interfering with proper officiating of the game.
- At all divisions, the referee has the right to request that any coach be seated or to move if he/she feels it is in the best interest of the players and the match.
- A dashed safety line is marked ten feet from each sideline. All participants, coaches, parents/guardians and spectators must stay behind this dashed line at all times during the game for safety reasons.

- Parents/guardians and spectators are not allowed on the playing field, team sidelines or bench area. They must remain on the spectator sidelines. No standing next to or behind the goals.
- Parents/guardians and spectators may not run up and down the sidelines. Find a comfortable place to sit or stand and enjoy the game.

Section 9: Sportsmanship

- Youth Sports takes sportsmanship very seriously. All players, coaches, parents and spectators must demonstrate positive sportsmanship and follow league policies at all times. Failure to do so may result disciplinary action. Any person ejected from a game at any time for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for at least one game (the teams next scheduled game). A second violation may result in suspension or removal from the program. No refunds will be given. Any violations during the tournament will result in immediate removal from the facility and remainder of the tournament.
- Participants are expected to follow the *Participant Code of Conduct and Guidelines*.
- Spectators are expected to follow the *Spectator Code of Conduct*.
- Coaches are expected to follow the *Coaches' Code of Ethics*.

Section 10: Officials and Elasticity Clause

- The league will supply one referee per game for the 1st-2nd grade division. Two referees will be supplied per game for the 3rd-4th and 5th-6th grade divisions.
- Volunteer coaches will referee the Kindergarten division. One volunteer coach from each team shall referee the game. Coaches must abide by the rules.
- Referees shall be granted authority to assess penalties in which coaches, players, and spectators can be ejected from any game.
- Referees will track scores and time for each game as well. Their scores are considered the official and final scores.
- The soccer rules in this manual do not cover all rules situations that may occur in a soccer game. Those rules and situations not covered in this manual will be governed by commonly accepted soccer rules as understood by the officials.

Section 11: League Administration

- All administration will be conducted by City of Mesa Youth Sports.
- City of Mesa Youth Sports has the right to make any changes or additions to the league that they feel are necessary to better benefit the program and its participants.

Section 12: Game Length

- Kindergarten: Four 6 minute quarters, 2 minutes between quarters and 5-minute halftime.
- 1st-2nd and 3rd-4th Grades: Four 12 minute quarters, 2 minutes between quarters and, 5-minute halftime.
- 5th-6th Grade: Two 25 minute halves and 5-minute halftime.
- The game clock runs continuously during periods. It only stops during timeouts.
- Officials can stop the clock on their own discretion (injury or to address an issue).
- Teams switch ends of the field at halftime. They remain on the same bench, but they shoot at the opposite goal for the second half.

- Repeated delays of game may result in a penalty. Delay of game includes taking too much time with game start, huddles, timeouts, in between plays, quarters and halves, and substitutions.

Section 13: Timeouts

- Grades Kindergarten-4th: Each team will receive one- 30 second timeout per quarter. Each team will receive one additional timeout in overtime. Timeouts may not be carried over to the next quarter or overtime.
- Grades 5th-6th: Each team will receive two- 30 second timeouts per half. Each team will receive one additional timeout in overtime. Timeouts may not be carried over to the next half or overtime.

Section 14: Overtime

- During the regular season, if the game is tied at the end of regulation time, then it will be declared a tie.
- During the tournament, if a game is tied at the end of regulation time, there will be an overtime of a 5-minute period. A coin is tossed and the team that wins the toss decides which goal it will attack. The other team takes the kickoff to start the overtime period.
- If the game is still tied at the end of the overtime period, then a shootout will be used to break the tie. Each team will select three players to kick. The teams will alternate kicks.
- If the game is still tied at the end of the shootout, a sudden death shootout will occur where each team will select one player at a time to alternately shoot. Teams will alternate every other until a winner is declared.
 - A player may not shoot a second penalty shot until every player on the team has taken their first, including the goalkeepers.
- The shooter may not kick the ball until the official has signaled that it is okay to do so. If the shooter kicks the ball before the signal, the shot is retaken regardless if it went in or not.
- The goalie in all divisions including 1st-2nd grade may use their hands during the shootouts.
 - The goalkeeper must stay on the goal line until the ball is struck. The keeper can move horizontally along the goal line at all times, but if they come off the goal line early, the referee will blow his whistle and the kick will be retaken.

Section 15: Substitutions

- At any stoppage of play and unlimited.
- Players being substituted in must stand at the midfield line and coaches must signal to the referee (to the other coach in kindergarten division) for a substitution request. The referee will then signal when the substitution can be made.

Section 16: Yellow and Card Offenses

- Excessive fouling or rough play may result in a yellow or red. One point and the ball will be awarded to the other team for each card given.
- Coaches and players may be given yellow and red cards for unsportsmanlike conduct. If a coach or player receives two yellow cards or one red card, they will be removed from the game.

- Unsportsmanlike conduct from parents/guardians and spectators may result in a bench yellow or red card for their team. If a parent/guardian or spectator receives two bench cards for their team, they will be removed from the game and disciplinary action may be taken.
- Repeated delays of game may result in a yellow or red card. Delay of game includes taking too much time with game start, timeouts, in between quarters and halves, and substitutions.

Section 17: Modifications to the Following Rules of Soccer

- Kindergarten Division
 - No flag posts are used
 - No penalty area or penalty kicks are used
 - No goal area is used
 - No goalkeepers are used. Players may play defense in the goal area, but no hands may be used.
 - No offside is used
 - No throw-ins used
 - No heading (safety concern)
 - all division
 - For start and restart of play, the opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least 4 yards from the ball until it is in play
 - Volunteer coaches must explain fouls and misconduct to players so they understand
 - Yellow and red cards may be used only for extreme behavior and offenses
 - On free kicks, they all are direct and opponents are at least 4 yards from the ball until it is in play.
 - A pass-in is considered as a direct free kick with the opponents 4 yards from the ball until it is in play.
 - The goal kick should be taken within 2-3 yards of the goal line anywhere across the width of the field of play at the nearest point from where the ball was retrieved. Opposing players must be 4 yards away from the ball until it is in play. It is suggested that if necessary that opponents are in their own half of the field until the ball is in play.
 - On corner kicks, that opponents remain at least four yards from the ball until it is in play.
- 1st-2nd Grade Division
 - No flag posts are used
 - No penalty area or penalty kicks are used
 - No goal area is used
 - No goalkeepers are used. Players may play defense in the goal area, but no hands may be used.
 - No offside is used
 - Throw ins or kicking the ball from the sideline can both be used
 - No heading (safety concern)
 - For start and restart of play, the opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least 4 yards from the ball until it is in play
 - Referees or volunteer coaches must explain fouls and misconduct to players so they understand
 - Yellow and red cards may be used only for extreme behavior and offenses

- On free kicks, they all are direct and opponents are at least 4 yards from the ball until it is in play.
- A pass-in is considered as a direct free kick with the opponents 4 yards from the ball until it is in play.
- The goal kick should be taken within 2-3 yards of the goal line anywhere across the width of the field of play at the nearest point from where the ball was retrieved. Opposing players must be four yards away from the ball until it is in play. It is suggested that if necessary that opponents are in their own half of the field until the ball is in play.
- On corner kicks, that opponents remain at least 4 yards from the ball until it is in play.
- 3rd-4th Grade Division
 - Flag posts are used
 - Penalty area is used
 - Goal area is used
 - Goalkeepers are used
 - No offside is used
 - Throw-ins are used
 - No heading (safety concern)
 - For start and restart of play, the opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least 8 yards from the ball until it is in play
 - On free kicks, they all are direct and opponents are at least 8 yards from the ball until it is in play.
 - Referees or volunteer coaches must explain fouls and misconduct to players so they understand
 - Yellow and red cards can be used.
 - On corner kicks, that opponents remain at least 8 yards from the ball until it is in play.
- 5th-6th Grade Division
 - Flag posts are used
 - Penalty area is used
 - Goal area is used
 - Goalkeepers are used
 - Offside is used
 - Throw-ins are used
 - No heading (safety concern)
 - For start and restart of play, the opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least 8 yards from the ball until it is in play
 - On free kicks, they all are direct and opponents are at least 8 yards from the ball until it is in play.
 - On corner kicks, that opponents remain at least 8 yards from the ball until it is in play.
 - Referees or volunteer coaches must explain fouls and misconduct to players so they understand.
 - Yellow and red cards can be used.



1
Direct free kick
(points in direction of kick)



2
Indirect
free kick



3
Play On



4
Timeout



5
(Wind-up to
start clock)



6
Penalty Kick
(point to spot),
Goal Kick
(point to goal area)



7
Caution/
ejection



8
Corner Kick
(point to corner)



9
Goal



NFHS Official Soccer Signals